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JULY 1, 2022 | VOLUME 13 | ISSUE 13

YOUR DONATION BENEFITS THE VENDORS.
PLEASE BUY ONLY FROM BADGED VENDORS.

America searches for answers after mass shootings. **Page 10**



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WHITE,**
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GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



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@groundcovernews, include vendor name and vendor #

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letter to the EDITOR

"No sale for saggars"

A few days ago I walked up Fourth Avenue toward the People's Food Coop and followed a man who showed me his butt crack, his underwear, and his jeans, in descending order. When we got to the Food Coop, he asked me to buy a "new" paper from him. I purchase one copy of every edition of Groundcover News; but politely declined to buy one from him, and walked on. A sales hint for Groundcover News vendors: you show me your butt crack, and I'll show you my back – without purchasing a paper from you. I encourage other members of the general public to adopt that policy. And the vendors might consider adding to the vendor code of conduct, "I will not show my butt crack." Add it, and it will be routinely violated, but that's just par for the course.

Sincerely,
David KE Dodge

"Accolade for a contributor"

I had the opportunity to meet Will Shakespeare; he was a great community advocate for the paper and I enjoyed reading his article about Provost Susan Collins and the Federal Reserve. I have enjoyed Groundcover for years and will look forward to continuing to patronize the paper!

Liz Hatfield

GROUNDCOVER NEWS

CREATING **OPPORTUNITY** AND A
VOICE FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE WHILE TAKING
ACTION TO END HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY.

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes towards production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for \$2, keeping all income and tips from each sale.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

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| 1/6 | \$145.00 | \$200.00 | 5 X 4 |
| 1/4 | \$200.00 | \$265.00 | 5 X 6.25 |
| 1/2 | \$375.00 | \$500.00 | 5 X 13 or 10.25 X 6.5 |
| full page | \$650.00 | \$900.00 | 10.25 X 13 |

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Full Year/Twenty-four Issues: **35%** off
Only run for two weeks/one issue: **40%** off
Additional **20%** discount for money saving coupons

MEET YOUR VENDOR



Andrew White, vendor No. 103

In one sentence, who are you?
I'm Andrew and I'm me.

Where do you usually sell Groundcover News?
Usually by the People's Food Co-op and by Sweetwater on Ashley.

What is your favorite spot in Ann Arbor?
My favorite spot to hang out is West Park. There are lots of trails and it can be a good spot to get away.

What words do you live by?
Never say Never.

What motivates you to sell Groundcover News?
You never know what can happen when selling the paper.

What's the most interesting thing that's happened to you while selling Groundcover News?
The most interesting thing was one time when I sold Groundcover News someone gave me a \$100 bill.

What are your hobbies?
I like to play on the computer, to collect baseball cards and to build model cars.

What's the best way to start the day?
The best way to start the day is with positive vibes, not to be so negative.

What would YOU ask?

If you have a question or issue you would like Groundcover vendors to discuss, email us at contact@groundcovernews.com

We will be featuring vendor responses in future issues.

Houseless, unhoused or homeless?

We all can agree that life is a divine right which needs no political, governmental nor military verification. We all have our providential existence as an actual scientific truth. We didn't come to life as a label to be carried throughout our lifetime. We are born as free thinking, vital and essential beings. The societies that each of us find ourselves born into do not set, crucially, the outlines in which we are to express and define our humaneness and right to be.

True, societies are necessary for the "effectual" interaction and settling of peoples; however, every living human Being must guard their own human dignity



CHRISTOPHER ELLIS
Groundcover vendor No. 483

and place in the world. We cannot carelessly dismiss this value to any government or religious entity. Life isn't a definition, and we are not to be susceptible, nor as moveable as property. We are not to be defined or scrutinized as

material willfully moved or limited.

To be free in our world requires that we keep our vital status as untouchables to any foreign power that requires that we be sovereign-less as an essential to be controlled, or to be housed within the benevolent good graces of a "higher" being.

Creed, ritual and dogma are not the principles that maintain the free-given right to be a life or a soul in our world. Hopefully in future articles I can begin a discussion with our readers on the distinction that the title of this piece provokes.

Blood on the ground

Blood on the floor of churches, stores and schools — the commons is a battleground. The pain of everyday life explodes in our face regularly. Suicide has gone from the 10th leading cause of death in children in 2008 to the fifth leading cause today. We may smile and ask, "How are you?" – happy that the grass grows and birds sing. Nevertheless there is an ache in our heart and the smell of fear in the air.

The pandemic complexity in the midst of the accelerating attention economy, the flood of coerced compliance and spectacular distraction demanding your attention, is shutting down our inner voice and the wisdom of the body. I walk down the street for some miles most days and observe that more people have a grim straight-ahead look.

There is the wish to normalize the mass shootings as if it is the human condition and the next threat is coming soon but now let's talk about the mental health crisis rather than the guns and violence. This is dangerous because it stigmatizes mental health challenges and obscures the data that mentally challenged people are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators.

Every time the police are called to scenes of emotional turmoil there may be another death or another prison inmate. Prisons are violence deep in our psyche and everyone knows it is the worst



KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

place to be. Whistleblowers may go to prison therefore compliance with the war machine becomes routine. Who has the nerve to be Julian Assange, Chelsea Manning or Edward Snowden? Who has the nerve to defend them?

If you want affordable housing to mean affordable for low-income people you will face the compliance of the commodity market which will define affordable in terms of median income. This puts many families in a crisis of overcrowding or houselessness which is an act of structural violence. When Martin Luther King linked militarism – that is, every level of organized violence from attack dogs and jails to nuclear weapons – with poverty and racism, he was called a communist. It's hard to say "The Emperor Has No Clothes" without being out of compliance, labeled as a threat or even a target of assassination.

Communists are the main scapegoat of capitalist oligarchs when the system becomes so dysfunctional that only war can save

them. It's a helluva distraction. Class warfare becomes manufacturing consent and gets the working class to fight imperialist wars. The current policy of full-spectrum domination focuses on psyops (meaning control of the narrative) and arose from the neoliberal imperialism epoch with its roots in Reaganomics: balance the budget on our backs but deficit-finance "Star Wars" and outspend the Soviet Union into oblivion. Now we see that any nation with aspirations to exercise their power, to put their security needs as equal to that of the United States of America anywhere, is propagandized into a threat and subject to full-spectrum domination strategies beginning with information warfare. Sanctions are more violent than bombs and are now killing people in as many as 30 countries – in our name. Sanctions punish the entire population so that shortages of food, potable water and medicine kill the young and elderly disproportionately.

If you live in the compliance bubble, then other people, cultures and systems easily become incarnate evil. It was said in the 19th century that the only good Indian was a dead Indian; in the 20th century Kill a Commie for Mommy, then the war on terrorism, so that endless war becomes normal. Every conflict can be exploited to sell weapons and as

'Broadband for all' investment sees first Washtenaw household connected

PETER LINDEMAN
Washtenaw County
Communications manager

In September 2021, the Board of Commissioners approved a historic investment aimed at making Washtenaw County one of the first counties in the state to create a path for every household to access high-speed broadband internet. In mid-June, the first Washtenaw County household was connected to broadband infrastructure as a result.

"After years of hard work by commissioners, county staff, and the members of the Broadband Task Force, it is extremely exciting to reach this important milestone," said Shannon Beeman, Commissioner for District 3.

"There is still work to do to ensure broadband is affordable and accessible for all of our residents, but this is a monumental step."

The first household was connected by Washtenaw Fiber Properties in Lima Township. Washtenaw Fiber Properties is one of four providers, selected as part of a competitive request for proposals in 2021, who will be receiving funding to fully connect Washtenaw County in the coming years.

"I said it when we approved these funds last year and will say it again now: this is a transformational moment for our community," said Jason Maciejewski, Commissioner for District 1, which includes Lima Township. "Access to reliable broadband

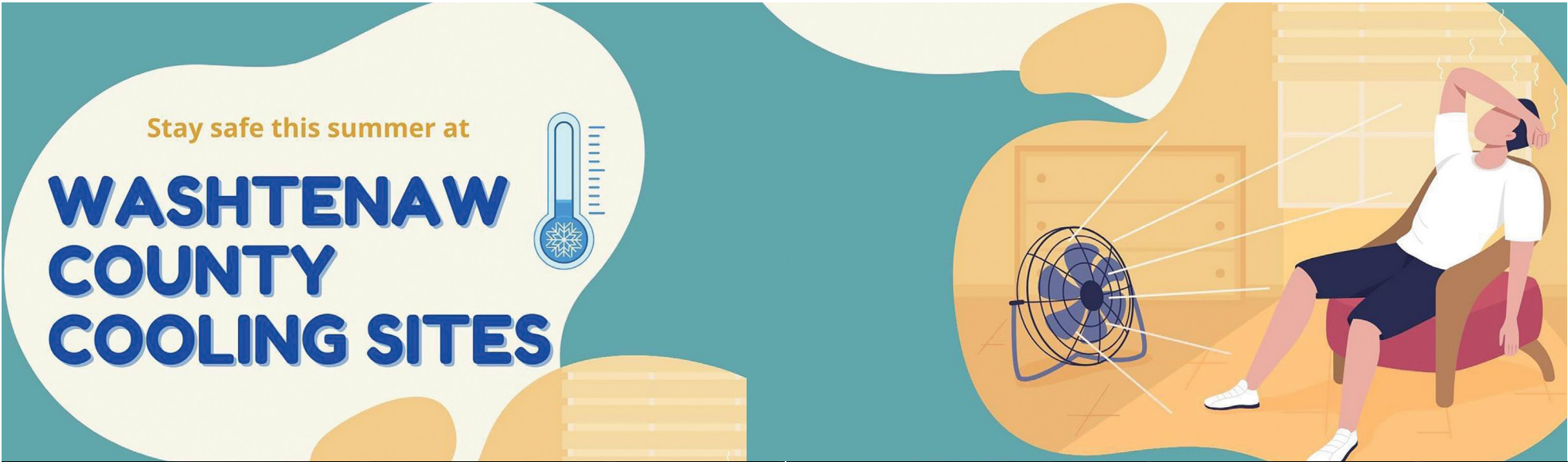
internet has become a necessity to access health care, education, and the economy, so seeing this investment begin to come to fruition should give hope to residents across the county."

According to the County's Opportunity Index, Lima Township has low Job Access and Education and Training scores. During a robust community feedback process in 2021 related to American Rescue Plan Act investments, residents emphasized that the pandemic had only made these issues worse. Lack of internet connectivity made it challenging for residents to participate in a more virtual workforce and for students to get the most out of remote learning.

While the first resident connected lives in Lima Township, over the next

few years approximately 3,000 residents in every corner of the county will benefit from the investment in broadband infrastructure. This investment of approximately \$15 million combined county general fund and federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars.

"We as a Board have worked hard to ensure that all of our investments prioritize the needs of our community," said Sue Shink, Commissioner for District 2 and Chair of the Board of Commissioners. "From addressing childcare access to supporting local nonprofits to bridging the digital divide by expanding broadband infrastructure, we look forward to the immediate and long-term positive impact these investments will have on the community."



| Location | Phone # | Hours | Masking? | Location | Phone # | Hours | Masking? |
|--|--------------|--|-------------|---|--------------|---|--|
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| Ann Arbor District Library (Mallets Creek) | 734-327-4200 | 10am - 8pm DAILY | Recommended | Saline Library | 734-429-5450 | 9am-9pm Mon-Thurs 10am-5pm Fri-Sat 1pm-5pm Sun | Recommended for entry; required for indoor programming |
| Ann Arbor District Library (Pittsfield) | 734-327-4200 | 10am - 8pm DAILY | Recommended | Salem-South Lyon Library | 248-437-6431 | 10am-7pm Mon-Thurs 10am-5pm Fri-Sat 1pm-5pm Sun | Recommended |
| Ann Arbor District Library (Traverwood) | 734-327-4200 | 10am - 8pm DAILY | Recommended | Washtenaw County Human Services Building (Atrium) | 734-481-2000 | 8:30am-5pm Mon-Fri | Recommended |
| Ann Arbor District Library (Westgate) | 734-327-4200 | 10am - 8pm DAILY | Recommended | Ypsilanti District Library (Michigan Avenue) | 734-482-4110 | 9am-9pm Mon-Thurs 10am-6pm Fri-Sat CLOSED Sun | Recommended |
| Briarwood Mall | 734-761-9550 | 11 am-8pm Mon-Thurs 10am-9pm Fri-Sat Noon-6pm Sun | Recommended | Ypsilanti District Library (Whittaker) | 734-482-4110 | 9am-9pm Mon-Thurs 10am-6pm Fri-Sat 1pm-5pm Sun | Recommended |
| Chelsea Library | 734-475-8732 | 9am-8pm Mon-Thurs 10am-6pm Fri 10am-3pm Sat 1pm-5pm Sun | Recommended | Milan Library | 734-439-1240 | 10am-6pm Mon, Wen, Fri 1pm-8pm Tues, Thurs 10am-4pm Sat CLOSED Sun | Recommended |
| Dexter Library | 734-426-4477 | 9am-9pm Mon-Thurs 10am-5pm Fri- Sat 1pm-5pm Sun | Recommended | Learn more at bit.ly/Wash-Cooling | | | |
| Manchester Library | 734-428-8045 | 10am-8pm Mon-Wed 10am-6pm Thurs-Fri 10am-2pm Sat CLOSED Sun | Optional | | | | |

Political alienation of homeless people

The homeless community is perhaps one of the most marginalized populations in the United States. Facing discrimination on multiple fronts, the homeless population is largely disregarded by those in government, all while being targeted by gentrification and harmful urban planning.

With limited access to voter registration and without funds to bankroll politicians, homeless people are restricted in mobilizing for change, rendering them effectively voiceless in the American political process.

In the context of the American political system, voter registration plays a central role in providing a voice to each segment of society. Certain restrictions have been set in place, making it difficult for some to register. Since each state is responsible for creating voter laws, these restrictions vary from place to place, an inconsistency causing confusion and allowing states to disenfranchise citizens at a higher rate than the nationwide standard. Among these restrictions is the need for a valid home address, which effectively disenfranchises a homeless person outright. A number of other federal resources and programs require a valid home address, putting people experiencing homelessness at a disadvantage, since it is generally not permitted to list homeless shelters as their addresses.

The biggest obstacle for registering homeless people to vote, however, remains finding access to valid identification. Thirty-six states have enacted voter identification laws, thus excluding segments of the population which may have difficulty obtaining the necessary documents – among those being people experiencing homelessness. The processes to obtain government identification are inaccessible for many homeless people, as this is one of the many programs requiring permanent residency and often one or more alternate forms of identification in order to apply. This measure, which is often attributed to stopping voter fraud, restricts the political freedom and voice of the many who may not have the means to obtain identification.

Since homelessness disproportionately affects those who belong to other marginalized identities, existing racial disparities in turn restrict access to ballots for homeless people. Therefore, forms of voter suppression that hinder other marginalized groups' right to vote, such as gerrymandering, strategized polling place reduction, or ex-felon



JAMES LOCKE
U-M student contributor

disenfranchisement, to name a few, affect segments of the homeless population as well.

The effects of these barriers and measures of voter suppression, under the guise of reducing ostensibly-rampant voter fraud, are felt tremendously among the homeless community.

As Dora K. Vertenten in "The Conversation" writes, in 2020 the voter registration rate for the general American population sat at roughly 65%, while only roughly 10% of the homeless population was registered. This wide discrepancy evidences the prevalent restricted access to the political system. With limited access to voting, homeless people are at a glaring disadvantage being heard and accommodated by those in power.

Voter suppression is largely implemented in an effort to benefit the ruling party. Since those who win elections get to shape the rules of the next elections, they often seek to give their own party an advantage, and employ strategies to restrict the turnout or effect of the voting base of the opposition. This is a bipartisan phenomenon, typically at a state level, which may directly or indirectly affect people experiencing homelessness, in an attempt to maintain the status quo and party majority.

Regardless of homeless political participation, politicians generally support laws and measures that

favor capitalist development, rather than the well-being of the homeless community. Politicians have a vested interest in passing legislation that is favorable for real estate development firms and the private sector, as they often provide campaign donations or an increased flow of capital. This leads to gentrification and harmful zoning laws, driving up rent prices, and consequently disadvantages those already living on the streets, perpetuating the cycle of homelessness. Modern urban planning laws often focus on hostile architecture intended to dispel homeless people and to prevent loitering, providing another instance in which public laws opt to dispel and harm homeless people, rather than to aid them.

It has become increasingly evident that change is needed to adequately involve people experiencing homelessness in the American political process. Measures can be taken to do so, including allowing homeless shelters to be listed as permanent addresses on applications for voter registration or identification, as is permissible in Michigan. On a broader scale, measures can be taken to extend the right to vote to all segments of society, in turn benefiting the homeless. For instance, automatic voter registration, the enfranchisement of ex-felons, fair districting, or an extension of early voting periods are among the many possible solutions to the problem of voter suppression negatively affecting the homeless community.

Editor's note: In the state of Michigan, people charged with a felony released from prison are eligible to vote. Additionally, due to the recent passage of Michigan Proposal 2, an independent commission draws the state's district boundaries. Michigan is one of very few states in the U.S. that have enacted both of these fair voting measures.

What's Happening at the Ann Arbor District Library

Open 10am-8pm Daily
Hang out in any of our five locations across town, browsing books, magazines, newspapers, and more, or check out movies, CDs, art prints, musical instruments, and science tools—you name it! Study and meeting rooms, fast and free WiFi, and plenty of places to sit and hang out.

Genealogy at AADL
AADL is a FamilySearch Affiliate Library, giving visitors access to genealogy resources with more than 6 billions searchable names and 2 billion images of genealogical records. View billions of birth, marriage, death, and census records from more than 130 countries to help discover family connections. Available at any AADL public computer with no registration required.

Friends of the AADL Bag Sale
The Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library are holding their Summer Bag Sale on July 9 (10am-4pm) and July 10 (1-4pm) at 265 Parkland Plaza (just off Jackson Road). Only \$5 for each bag of books with proceeds benefitting the Library. Don't miss it!

FEATURED EVENTS

AADL SEWING & LETTERPRESS LABS

Visit the Secret Lab on the lower level of the Downtown Library. At Sewing Lab, guest instructors teach different techniques, or you can work on your own projects on the lab's sewing machines. Letterpress Lab lets you experience the traditional process of printing by hand using wood type and our Vandercook cylinder press.

Sewing Lab: July 11 & July 25, 6-7:30pm
Letterpress Lab: July 14 (5:30-7:30pm) & July 30 (2-4pm).

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My trip to D.C. for the Poor People's Campaign March on Washington

My trip to Washington, D.C. for the Poor People's Campaign rally was very interesting, and very educational. The bus was late but that's okay. The bus picked folks up from other places in Michigan and came to us in Ann Arbor from Flint. Five vendors from Groundcover News went to this rally: Jay Gordon, Derek Allen, Ken Parks, La Shawn Courtwright, and me - James "Joe" Woods.

Before heading to D.C., we made one more stop, in Toledo, Ohio, where I met a wonderful Toledo lady named Marie Flannery. She had multiple reasons for wanting to attend the rally. One reason was she had never attended a rally at the nation's capital before and wanted to do it. She heard about the Poor People's Campaign and really liked what it stood for.

Ms. Flannery said she thinks that everybody should have economic justice in this country. She wants the economy to be more equitable so everybody has a chance to succeed. She also said there are so many systems that keep people down that need to change - people need higher wages, better healthcare, all of those basic building blocks.

After talking a little bit more I found out she was the CEO of the Fair Housing Center in Toledo. They investigate cases of housing discrimination, educate the public about their rights dealing with housing discrimination, and also work to change policies so that housing is fair for everybody. She was very much looking forward to hearing Reverend Barber, one of the Campaign co-chairs, speak.

The next person on the bus I talked to was a man, also from Toledo, named Taron Cunningham who worked for an organization called Ohio Workers First. It is a coordinated campaign from the state level that works with Democratic candidates to



JOE WOODS
Groundcover vendor No. 103

get them elected on these issues that we care about: putting workers first, increasing wages and making sure they have manufacturing in Ohio. He was attending this rally so Ohio can continue to position itself to have a higher living wage and so that families have affordable housing.

Over the past 20 years, the cost of housing in northwest Ohio has greatly outpaced income growth. We need to close that affordability gap on the supply side (increasing supply of housing stock) and by increasing wages. Mr. Cunningham wants to see the 140 million low wage workers in America come out and vote on August 2 in the Ohio primary/special election and in the general election on November 8. He wants the low-wage workers to increase their votes in northwest Ohio in particular, and wants to see a 3% increase in low-wage worker voter participation.

Once we got to Washington, there were thousands of people out there rallying and protesting with signs and costumes and just letting their voices be heard. This being my very first protest rally I really didn't know what to expect, but the turnout was superb in my opinion. Everybody in the rally was very passionate about affordable housing and how the government is spending millions of dollars on wars in other countries rather than

focusing on addressing poverty in our own country. There were a lot of signs protesting about this war and the part that America is playing in it with Russia and Ukraine. People are really pissed.

While I was interviewing people, Jay and Derek were selling our special issues to the ralliers and to all of our amazement, it seemed like everybody bought a paper from them with no hesitation to support the cause. That was a beautiful thing to me. No hesitation about the price and they knew that we were from Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The speakers were awesome! I tried to get the footage but was unsuccessful. I do apologize about that. This is my very first assignment doing articles like this - but this is not going to be my last one. First, though, I'll take a break from journalism, and actually do a little protesting myself and get to know what the organizations that were out there are about. (Video of the march can be viewed from the Facebook page of the Poor People's Campaign: a National Call for Moral Revival.)

I bumped into a young lady from Columbia, South Carolina, who I estimate was in her early twenties, named Ken Smith. Talking with her really convinced me that what I do for a living is the right thing for me to do. It's not about money, it's about doing what's right. She said it's just immoral, disgusting and violent what this country does to the poor - working and not working - people. She said millions of people died of Covid and people don't have health care; millions of people are starving and children are hungry. She said it's ridiculous. In her opinion, our government only wants to pump money into the military, into weapons to attack, impoverish and colonize other countries. People here

need basic human rights.

She likes the fact people are coming together and wants people to come together, but it's more than just that. It's time to get organized, make sure people are plugged in and continue in the struggle, continue to protest, continue to have events and continue to be together and fight against this system. She concluded, "This can't be the end. We're not outnumbered, we're out-organized. The task is to get together, stay together and get organized so we can get this system out of here."

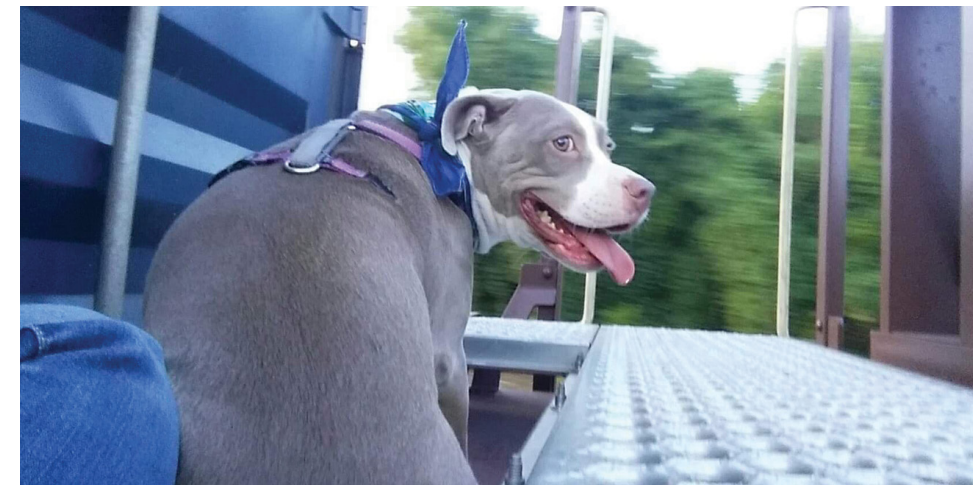
During the rally I met a few people who were from Michigan. Two of them were actually young adults from Ann Arbor that bought papers from me on my corner at Liberty and Main. Another one was Erica Forbes from Clarkston who was with her auntie Aggie Medige who is from Peekskill, New York, and is with the Democratic Socialists of America. The most important issues to her were closing the high school to jail pipeline and getting rid of the prison industrial complex; also fair wages and bringing back the middle class by closing the wage gap and taxing the wealthy.

I'm no politician and not into politics, but I'm a firm believer in "united we stand divided we fall," so we have to stay united so we can stand against what the government does to America. They have to remember we elect them into office; they work for us and it's a shame that the richest country in the world has all this poverty.

In the Netherlands the government gives homes to people who are homeless. Now, their taxes are high - 25% up to 52%, depending on how much money you make. The more money you make the higher taxes you pay: no homelessness. Let's think, America, about what's really going on in the world and in our country.

meet my pet pal: **ALICIA & HAZELNUT**

A column on why those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity have pets and why it is important to support that.



How did you get your pet?

I had been working for a carnival in Madera, California. After a while the job wasn't really working out for me so I started hitchhiking towards San Francisco and I only made it about four miles before I ended up at a truck stop and saw this guy walking this tiny little seven-week old puppy. I asked him if I could pet her. He informed me he was trying to sell her and there went my last paycheck!

From day one she was the happiest little puppy. We made it to San Francisco pretty quickly and Hazelnut got to grow up with the influence of other traveling and homeless dogs on Haight Street. We would go for walks where I would let her just lead me through Golden Gate Park and go wherever she wanted to go.

Tell us a few things about your pet?

She always stops and smells the flowers, which has often

reminded me to stop and take a breath and just take in the things around me which, in part, has helped both my and her PTSD from traumatic things that have happened on the road. For the most part, she is a very mellow dog who makes it very easy to remember to stop and smell the flowers. She loves to roll around in the grass and take her time going anywhere she goes. Generally just making me remember to take life as it comes and just enjoy the ride.

Hazelnut has helped with my PTSD so much. Without her I don't know where I would be in life. She came to me at one of my darkest moments - after having my dog Daisy stolen from me in Los Angeles where I started my journey with the carnival.

What rewards do you get from having a pet?

The best reward of all is having my best friend with me for the past (almost) six years. (Her

birthday is July 7.) No matter where I've gone she's been right by my side and has my back.

What is a challenge of having a pet while experiencing homelessness/poverty/economic exploitation?

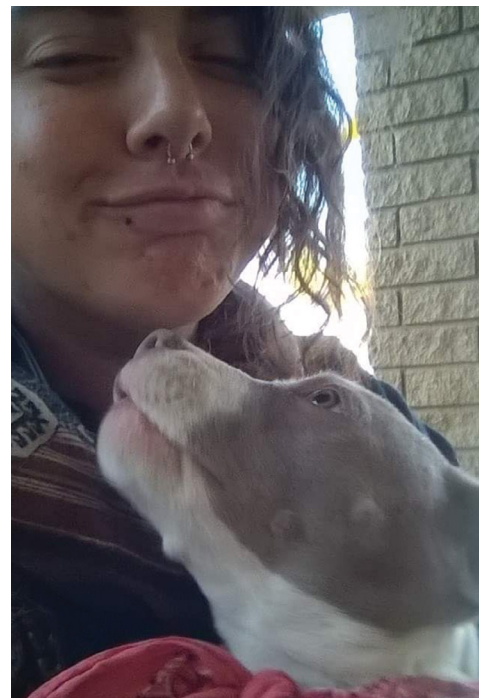
I would say one of the biggest challenges is that she has quite a lot of medical problems and recently has started having seizures. The dynamic has shifted from her being my backbone to me being the one needing to make sure she has a calm quiet environment. We loved life on the road but she has developed epilepsy, and now I need to be the one to calm her down and try to help her remember to breathe and get through the things stressing her.

One of the biggest challenges while being homeless with Hazelnut was definitely people assuming that she didn't have what she needed or that I couldn't care for her, when in fact she was able to spend 24/7 outdoors with her human getting constant exercise and loving attention from other people in the community. Some of the smaller challenges included being able to take advantage of resources such as going to feeds that were indoors and not being allowed indoors because of my dog or being able to go places to shower or going inside of a store to buy anything, worrying about leaving my dog outside. I usually would have to send someone inside the feed or

store for me, or take turns going inside with a trusted friend, although it was definitely worth it.

What is something our readers should know about Hazelnut if they see you both on the street?

If you were to see me and Hazelnut out in the street, I would definitely want you to know that she will always come first, no matter the circumstances. Whether I'm living indoors or outdoors, Hazelnut is the queen of the castle. And definitely feel free to ask to say hello! She's a ham and loves attention; just watch out for her feet when she starts rolling around on her back kicking from the belly rubs, haha!



Left: Groundcover vendors Joe Woods, Derek Allen (second and third from left) and two Ann Arbor residents ran into each other in D.C. Middle: La Shawn Courtwright (pictured right) and a member of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. Right: Two protestors carrying a "Fight the War Machine" banner in front of the nation's capitol.

VISIT GROUND COVER NEWS AT THE ANN ARBOR ART FAIR

Groundcover volunteers, staff and vendors will be at the Ann Art Fair this summer. Come by the nonprofit booths to get to know our team, learn more about the organization and pick up the second annual Community Arts Edition!

THURSDAY, JULY 21- SATURDAY, JULY 23
DOWNTOWN ANN ARBOR



St. Francis of Assisi Parish

"If God were your Father, you would love me,
for I came from God and am here;
I did not come on my own, but he sent me."
+ Christ Jesus (John 8:42)

Come Worship With Us!

Mass Schedule

Saturday 5 pm (English) & 7 pm (Spanish)
Sunday 8:30 am, 10:30 am,
12:30 pm, 5 pm

2250 East Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor
www.StFrancisA2.com 734-821-2100

America searches for answers after mass shootings

On May 21, 2021, the Brennan Center for Justice in New York City published “State Policing Reforms since George Floyd’s Murder,” a report by staff writers Ram Subramanian and Lelly Arcy. The subtitle is, “While the past year has seen some victories, transformative change in policing remains elusive.” The report provided some clear-eyed facts on the risk of being Black. It said, “While comprising only 13 percent of the country, Black people face 21 percent of police contact, make up 33 percent of people behind bars, and are over three times more likely to be killed by the police than their white counterparts.”

The Black Lives Matter Movement, demonstrating alongside grassroots community organizations, gave us hope during the summer of 2020 when multiracial protestors across the nation and across the globe called for profound changes in racial justice and community policing. It did seem that the dream of equal justice under law was coming to fruition. The large interracial and intergenerational protests called on American cities to “defund the police.”

The Brennan Center Report said that “... cities and counties have begun restructuring how local budgets and law enforcement are deployed in service of public safety. For example, Austin, Los Angeles, and at least 12 other cities pledged to cut police budgets with plans to reinvest in community programs such as supportive housing, violence prevention, and other services. Some local governments have since walked back some of these promises. Minneapolis never disbanded the police department, instead spending \$6.4 million to recruit more officers.”

We have seen a large-scale reversal of promises to defund police in most major and medium-sized cities, including New York. The Bureau of Justice Statistics data shows that serious crimes are going up in many cities since the COVID-19 pandemic. Many cities have used the rising crime rates to justify increases in police budgets.

Although the changes and reforms in 2021 may not be very durable, the Brennan Center for Justice observed some significant improvements. The report stated: “Notably, San Francisco launched crisis response teams to respond to behavioral health calls in lieu of police, and Berkeley voted to limit law enforcement involvement in low-level traffic stops. Minneapolis and other cities made commitments to end or reduce police presence in schools. New York City, home to the nation’s largest police force, just became the first municipality to end qualified immunity for officers (joining Colorado



WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

in doing so).”

Eye-witness and cell phone videos showed that George Floyd was killed when Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck for 9 minutes and 20 seconds. He couldn’t breathe. Many states have banned that form of deadly force and other horrific police practices.

Here in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County, effective community policing is gradually taking shape. All the stakeholders and their many voices have begun to come to the table and listen to one another. It will take time. There is a wise saying about building a desirable city — “Rome was not built in a day!”

Ms. Lisa Jackson, chairwoman of the Ann Arbor Police Oversight Review Commission, met with University of Michigan students, the Avalon Housing Director, the Senior Pastor of Vineyard Church, and several Ann Arbor area residents at Wheeler Park a few months ago. Jackson led a community conversation and dialogues on effective community policing. Recently, there was a zoom meeting with local community leaders and residents in order to get further input and feedback on proposals.

Hate-Filled Racist Mass Shooting, Buffalo

The “New York Times” posted coverage of the Buffalo Mass Shooting from May 14 to May 15, 2022. These two Times headlines released shortly after the shooting reflect the community’s fear, anxiety and uncertainty: “10 people are killed and 3 are wounded in a mass shooting at a Buffalo grocery store,” and “Bodies were everywhere. Witnesses describe the scene at TOPS.”

Since the racist shooting on May 14, many opinion leaders and politicians have zeroed in on what the police detectives discovered from the suspect’s social media platforms, including his online manifesto. The “Times” reported, “Through the 180 pages of hate-filled writing he posted online, a common theme emerged: The notion that White Americans are at a risk of being replaced by people of color.” The “New York Times” reporters (Troy

Closson, Eduardo Medina and Jack Healy) continued, “Gunmen have referenced the racist idea, known as ‘replacement theory,’ during a string of mass shootings and other violence in recent years. It was once associated with a far right fringe, but has become increasingly mainstream, pushed by politicians and popular television programs. And it has repeatedly been the motivation for attacks across the United States and beyond, from the Poway, Calif. Synagogue shooting in 2019 to the killings of 51 worshippers at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, the same year.” The writers continued, “The racist theory was directly referenced in a four-page screed written by the man charged with killing more than 20 people in El Paso, which described an attack in response to ‘the Hispanic invasion of Texas’ and outlined fears about the group gaining power in the United States. One year earlier, when 11 people were killed at the ‘Tree of Life’ synagogue in Pittsburgh, the accused gunman had espoused similar racist views, referring to the people helped by a Jewish agency — refugees — as ‘invaders.’”

On May 15, 2022, the headline news of National Public Radio (NPR) WILW affiliate was, “It is 19 weeks into the year and America has already seen 198 mass shootings.” The first paragraph read, “The 10 people killed, and additional three injured, make this weekend’s racially motivated attack at Buffalo, N.Y., the deadliest mass shooting of the year in the United States. It is also the 198th mass shooting in 2022. With just over 19 weeks into the year, this averages out to about 10 such attacks a week.

“The tally comes from ‘The Gun Violence Archives’—an Independent data collection organization. The group defines mass shooting as an incident in which four or more people are killed, excluding the shooter.”

The Gun Violence Archives also has information on massacres in recent years which were carried out by perpetrators allegedly driven by hate and racism, including the 2015 mass shooting at a historic African American Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

Since George Floyd’s murder and right before the racist mass shooting at Buffalo, Black residents in the immediate area had been complaining about their bad experience with community policing. In their predominantly Black zip code, they noted that the local police often target Black folks for harassment and intimidation. Some residents told reporters at the crime scene that nothing has changed since George Floyd’s murder on the streets of Minneapolis.



FBI officers wait to enter TOPS grocery store in Buffalo, NY, where a mass shooting occurred on May 14. Photo credit: The New York Times.

Professor Cornel West of Princeton University recently posted an Op-Ed in “The Guardian,” blaming some American political leaders for the mass shooting carnage. He said, “After the death of George Floyd, there was a marvelous display of multiracial solidarity, not just here, but around the world. But the US has been unable to fight against the neo-fascist challenges ... They have become the public face of US neofascism, and their targets are Black people, indigenous people and LGBTQ people.”

Mass Shooting at Robb Elementary School, Uvalde

Around noon on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, news channels started reporting an active shooting incident at Robb Elementary School in rural Uvalde which is 85 miles west of San Antonio, Texas. Preliminary reports said the gunman was 18 years old. He entered an elementary school and started shooting. Early reports said the suspect killed the teacher and started shooting the elementary school kids. Fourteen students were feared dead. A late afternoon update brought the tally to two teachers dead and 19 children killed. The painful tragedy has brought sad memories of earlier school shootings in Parkland, Fla.; Oxford, Mich.; and Sandy Hook, Conn., among others. ABC News guest commentator Mr. Brad Garrett asked, “Do we have a reliable way of stopping these mass shootings?”

School Safety and Violence Prevention Programs are important components of community policing reforms. The Associated Press recently posted a headline entitled, “After Texas Shooting, Schools around US Boost Security.” The tragedy of Robb Elementary School in Uvalde brought back shared memories of Columbine High School in Colorado, where two male high school

see VIOLENCE next page ➡

Affordable Housing is a National Crisis, it is not unique to Ann Arbor!

Rent in AA is just like avocados. If the cost of making avocados goes up, then you pay more for them in the grocery store. Nobody is going to grow and sell avocados (or apartments) to lose money.

The State of Michigan has a law that prevents Rent Control.

City Council recently passed a new “Early Leasing Signing Ordinance.” Tenants used to have approximately six months to seek out a place to live and the new ordinance has reduced that to less than two months. Council needs to learn about a basic economic principle called “Supply and Demand” as they tighten the rental market by limiting access. This limitation has put tremendous upward pressure on rents as all demand is squeezed into less than two months. Guess Who Pays (GWP) in the end, the Tenants.

The City has a new brainchild called “The Right to Renew” but not at fixed rent which would be rent control. Landlords are glad to renew a lease if the terms were followed; it saves them \$. Landlords and Tenants will spend more money on legal fees when a Tenant and Landlord disagree

on “Their Right To Renew.” GWP.

The City is about to institute A2Zero to reduce our carbon footprint to zero. A great program, it is needed to help save our planet. About the 55% of the residents of AA are Tenants so Council is placing almost ALL requirements and expenses for A2Zero on just Rental Housing. Why not spread the expenses of A2Zero over ALL areas, ALL residents and structures and get faster results? The answer is Political. Landlords only have a few votes and homeowners have a lot. Guess Who Pays for ALL the A2Zero mandates (new electric furnaces, water heaters, stoves, new windows, etc.) to Rental Housing, that’s right, the Tenants.

There are many, many things the City could do to reduce rents. It could start with eliminating sewer and water hook up fees to affordable housing projects or giving a tax rebate tied to rent reduction in affordable housing units, it could have required new Affordable Housing Units as part of the Briarwood Area Rezoning which lined their buddies’ pockets via increased density. They could even consult professionals in an area before they mandate changes, not just listen to the most vocal 100 students. Council never sought input from Landlords and Stakeholders

about the Early Lease Signing Ordinance. Perhaps they think they are more knowledgeable than all the Housing Providers in AA regarding rental property issues? They are about to learn another economic principle called, “The Law of Unintended Consequences” when you legislate in a hurry with emotion and no in depth research. The City has an ordinance that prevents more than six unrelated people from living in a rental housing unit. Why does this even exist, can’t adults decide for themselves? It prevents large, more A2Zero-efficient group housing. Removing this limitation will instantly increase housing stock. Who gains if removed: Landlords AND Tenants but it may decrease City income. Politics anyone? GWP. Call, text, or email City Council members and tell them you support applying A2Zero mandates to ALL AA residents and structures NOT just Rental Properties. Don’t forget to Vote, maybe for new people who are less political, who will research and investigate consequences before they legislate and will stop raising our rents.

This Public Service Information was paid for by Citizens for Affordable Housing.

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Tell City Council to Stop Raising Our Rents

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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Pulled pork

JUSTEN WHITE

Groundcover vendor No. 543

Ingredients:

4-5 lbs of pork roast (shoulder or butt)
2 teaspoons of minced garlic
2 teaspoons of minced onion
¼ teaspoon of black pepper
1 20oz bottle of BBQ sauces (Sweet Baby Ray's suggested)
1 liter Coca Cola (or root beer for sweeter taste)

Directions:

Place roast in a five quart crock pot. Season with garlic, onion and black pepper. Pour Coca Cola until it reaches nearly the top of the roast.

Set crockpot on low heat and cook 8-10 hours

When ready to serve, remove roast from Crock Pot to a platter. Remove any bones and trim away fat. With a fork in each hand, begin "pulling"



apart into thin shreds. Add BBQ sauce and fold into the meat.

*Note: if preparing for a potluck setting, pour one cup of crock pot liquid into a measuring cup and discard the remainder. Prepare your meat and return it to the crock pot and continue to pour liquid on the meat to keep it from drying out.

Perfect for July 4th weekend!

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.

- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.

- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper or selling past monthly issues.

- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.

- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other

Groundcover vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.

- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.

- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.

- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover.

- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.

- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

If you would like to report a violation of the Vendor Code please email contact@groundcovernews.com or fill out the contact form on our website.

Summer

IAN DEWEY

Groundcover contributor

I relish the summer. I try to enjoy every moment of it, beginning with the blades of grass and leaves dotting the spring landscape. Here in Michigan we know how fleeting this season is, and because of that, we have to take every opportunity to bask in the sun's resounding glory. The skies are blue, intermittently lined with thunderstorms that come infrequently enough to be a welcome reprieve from the heat and humidity under whose pressure the city groans.

Yes, I relish the summer — every waking moment of it; even the bugs which ambush us.

Feeble creatures are preferable to the nipping cold biting our limbs during the dark, cold winter. But that dreary season which forces us to hunker down under a thick blanket of snow makes the overgrowth of grass and green that much more worth the while.

When will we learn to enjoy the auspices of nature, rather than the confines of steel and glass? When will we take a step back and realize that the answer was always before us? It seems that some of us have missed the point of the whole enterprise we call "life." We are burdened with knowledge, but what kind of knowledge?

Knowledge of self, I suppose, would help. It's hard to fathom that these gentle, blue days will eventually gasp for breath only a couple months from now. Knowledge of the transient nature of things, of people. It's difficult to imagine that in a few hundred years, only a few of us will have stakes in the claim of culture — a slight breath in the wind to remind us that there's a reason to keep going. And those are only the relatively benign kinds of knowledge.

But knowledge aside, there is the light reflecting off the tree from the sun, and worming its way into my eyes. And I relish every moment of gazing at its crisp, green hues.

Support an Alternative Business Model

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